



SFBPC "Currents"



A Publication of the Sport Fishing & Boating Partnership Council

The SFBPC is an advisory committee to the Secretary of the Interior and the Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service. The purpose of the SFBPC is to provide advice to the Secretary of the Interior through the Service Director on aquatic resource conservation issues and to enhance partnerships among industry, constituency groups, and government.

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Meetings

American Sportfishing Association (ASA) Sportfishing Summit brings together Industry and Government

Members of the recreational fishing and boating community met on October 27-29, 2004, in Hilton Head, SC, for the annual ASA business meeting, the Sportfishing Summit. Representatives from Federal agencies responsible for fisheries management joined in the discussions. The annual meeting provides an opportunity for ASA members and industry leaders to discuss the state of their industry and issues that affect both their bottom line and the health of aquatic resources.

Steve Williams, FWS Director, was a participant in many of the meetings. Doug Hobbs, SFBPC Coordinator, and Phil Million, Division of Conservation Partnerships Chief, heard updates from the members of the Government Affairs and Communications Committees. Service staff also participated in a meeting session designed to create a strategy for advocacy on behalf of aquatic resource issues. Participants learned about other advocacy efforts and considered successful concepts that may be integrated into an angling advocacy effort.

BASS and Fisheries Leaders take steps to create an "Angling Agenda"

Following up on the July 30-31, 2004 BASS/ESPN Outdoors Fisheries Leadership Conference held in Charlotte, NC, at the Citgo Bassmaster Classic, members of the sport fishing community met in Hilton Head, SC to begin the work of addressing the recommendations from the Charlotte meeting. Noreen Clough, BASS Conservation Director, shared the outcomes of the Charlotte meeting and led the effort to identify next steps. The BASS effort seeks to craft a common conservation message and communication strategy for use by sport fishing and aquatic resource conservation interest groups.

The group considered various messages and agreed to continue to pursue a joint communications strategy. There was a consensus that this effort and efforts such as the ASA Angling Advocacy effort are complimentary.



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Eye on the Media

*From The New York Times; Tuesday,
November 30, 2004*

Spawning of Interloper Fish in Potomac Worries Experts

By Felicity Barringer

WASHINGTON, Nov. 2 - Nineteen northern snakehead fish, widely feared interlopers, were caught this summer in a 13-mile stretch of the Potomac River where it widens below the nation's capital on its way to the Chesapeake Bay. But the final and smallest catch was particularly disheartening.

A three-inch fingerling fished out of Dogue Creek, 15 miles south of here, at the beginning of October indicates that the snakehead is reproducing in local waters that are beloved by bass fishermen.

*From The New York Times; Saturday,
October 30, 2004*

Proposed New Appeals Process for Dams Angers Several Groups

By Felicity Barringer

WASHINGTON, Oct. 29 - A proposed Interior Department regulation that would create a unique appeals process for hydropower companies seeking relief from regulations intended to protect fish and other wildlife is prompting criticism from Indian tribes, state governments and environmental groups.

The proposal, published last month, injects the new appeals process in the middle of the multistage process that a hydropower company complete to renew its license to operate dams. The license renewal process, under the overall umbrella of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, gives several agencies, including the Fish and Wildlife Service in the Interior Department or the National Marine Fisheries Service in the Commerce Department, authority to require dam owners to take certain steps to protect wildlife. (Full story at <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/10/30/politics/30dam.html?pagewanted=print&position=>)

*From The Washington Post; Thursday,
October 28, 2004*

Proposal Restricts Appeals on Dams Administration Plan Could Help Hydropower Firms Avoid Costs By Blaine Harden, Page A01

SEATTLE, Oct. 27 -- The Bush administration has proposed giving dam owners the exclusive right to appeal Interior Department rulings about how dams should be licensed and operated on American rivers, through a little-noticed regulatory tweak that could be worth hundreds of millions of dollars to the hydropower industry.

The proposal would prevent states, Indian tribes and environmental groups from making their own appeals, while granting dam owners the opportunity to take their complaints -- and suggested solutions -- directly to senior political appointees in the Interior Department. (Full story at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A3721-2004Oct27?language=printer>)



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*From The Washington Post; Saturday,
October 23, 2004*

President Signs Corporate Tax

Legislation

**\$143 Billion Measure Is Bush's Fifth Major Cut
By Jonathan Weisman, Page A10**

With no fanfare, President Bush yesterday signed into law the most sweeping corporate tax legislation in nearly two decades and the fifth major tax cut since he took office less than four years ago.

His signature means that Bush and the Republican Congress have fundamentally changed the U.S. tax code in ways large and small, for struggling individuals and corporate giants, bow-and-arrow makers and billionaires. Tax experts and academics remain deeply divided about the wisdom and effectiveness of these tax changes, but few disagree on their importance. (Full story at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A54128-2004Oct22?language=printer>)

**Opinions expressed in news stories are those of the writers and media outlets from which the stories originated, not those of the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council.*

On the Hill

Congress is out for the November elections.

Information on the Corporate Tax Bill

For information on the “American Jobs Creation Act of 2004” (see story under “Eye on the Media”) visit the House of Representatives Committee of Ways and Means website:

<http://waysandmeans.house.gov/Special.asp?section=1570>

The bill, signed by President Bush on October 22, 2004 (Public Law 108-357), makes changes to the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. Language from the final conference report that was signed into law reduces the excise tax on fishing tackle boxes from 10 percent to 3 percent (Section 333) and removes “sonar devices suitable for finding fish” from the list of sport fishing equipment in the Internal Revenue Service Code that is subject to manufacturer excise taxes (Section 334).

Current FWS Federal Register Notices

To review current FWS notices and/or proposed rules open for comment, visit the FWS Office of Policy and Directives Management Federal Register web page: <http://policy.fws.gov/frsystem/opendocs.cfm>



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FWS News

Interior Secretary Announces Coastal Wetland Grants to Protect Wildlife and Habitat in 10 States

WASHINGTON, DC - Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton announced today that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will award more than \$13 million in grants to 10 states to conserve, restore and protect coastal wetlands. States awarded grants for fiscal year 2005 under the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program are Alaska, Georgia, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, North Carolina, Texas, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin.

Full news release can be viewed at:
<http://news.fws.gov/NewsReleases/R9/E075CCDD-C36A-19FA-1939E5B5ADB0DA64.html>

Calendar / Upcoming Meetings

October 31-November 3, 2004
Southeastern Association of Fish & Wildlife
Agencies Annual Meeting
Hilton Head, South Carolina

November 30-December 3, 2004
SFBPC FWS Fisheries Program Evaluation
Workgroup
New Orleans, Louisiana

December 7-9, 2004
IAFWA Conservation Education Summit
Shepherdstown, West Virginia

December 12-15, 2004
Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference
Indianapolis, Indiana

January 11, 2004
Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation Board
Meeting
San Diego, California

March 13-16, 2005
2005 International Boating & Water Safety Summit
Newport Beach, California

March 16-20, 2005
70th North American Wildlife & Natural Resources
Conference
Crystal Gateway Marriott; Arlington, Virginia

**For more information of the Sport
Fishing and Boating Partnership Council
visit <http://sfbpc.fws.gov>**

or

**contact SFBPC Coordinator Doug Hobbs
at doug_hobbs@fws.gov**

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